



Wildflowers

Death Valley National Park



“Will the wildflowers be good this year?”

“Where can we go to see them?”

“What kinds/colors will there be?”

“When will the peak bloom be?”

These questions are often asked by people planning springtime visits to Death Valley. Although there are many variables involved in the desert wildflower shows,

there are a few guidelines you can use to find answers to these questions.

There are over 1000 plant species in Death Valley National Park, including 13 species of cactus and 23 endemics (plants that are known to grow only in the Death Valley region). Most of the “showy” plants are desert annuals, also referred to as *ephemerals* (short-lived). Colors range from white and yellow to purple, blue, red and bright magenta.

Some years the desert is spectacular with wildflowers; other years the blossoms are almost nonexistent (but never totally absent). A good wildflower year depends on at least three things:

- ◆ Well-spaced rainfall throughout the winter and early spring;
- ◆ Sufficient warmth from the sun
- ◆ Lack of desiccating winds.

The best time to see a spring floral display is in years when rainfall has been several times the Death Valley annual average of about 1.9 inches. In general, heavy rains in late October with no more rain through the winter months, will not bring out the flowers as well as rains that are evenly-spaced throughout the winter and into the spring.

Peak blooming periods for Death Valley

Mid February - Mid April

Where: lower elevations (the valley floor and alluvial fans)

Wildflowers: Desert Gold, Gravel-ghost, Pebble Pincushion, Notch-leaf and Caltha-leaf Phacelia, Brown-eyed and Golden Evening Primrose, Mojave Desert Star, Desert Five-spot, Beavertail Cactus

Early April - Early May

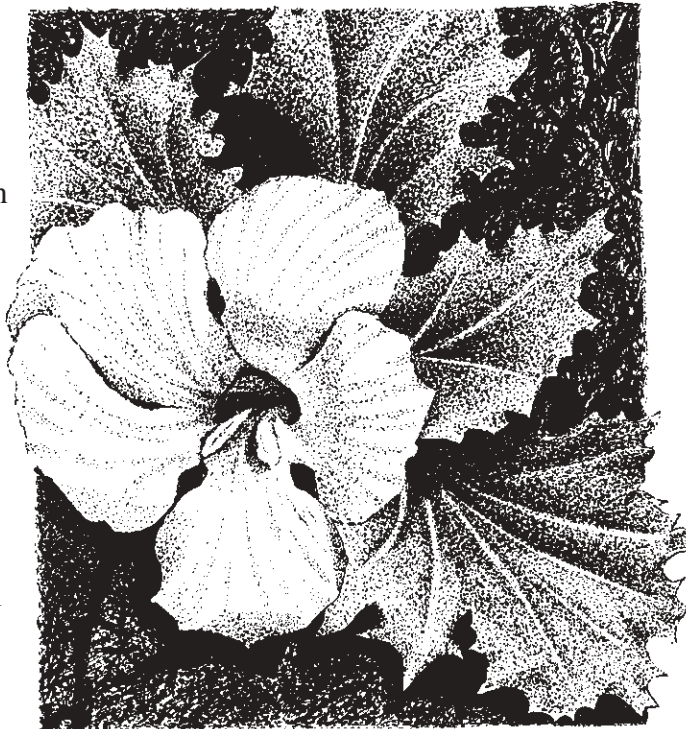
Where: 2,000 to 4,000 feet elevations (upper desert slopes, canyons, higher valleys)

Wildflowers: Brittlebush, Death Valley Sage, Mojave Aster, Indigobush, Indian Paintbrush, Prince's Plume, Globemallow, Mariposa Lily, Parish Larkspur, Death Valley Phacelia, Bear Poppy, Panamint Daisy, Joshua tree, Silver Cholla, Hedgehog Cactus.

Late April - Early June

Where: above 4,000 ft. elevations (mountain slopes, upper canyons)

Wildflowers: Magnificent Lupine, Indian Paintbrush, Panamint and Death Valley Penstemon, Purple Sage, Stansbury Phlox, Cliffrose, Rosemary Buckwheat, Tufted Evening Primrose, Grizzly Bear Prickly Pear



Rocklady *Maurandya petrophila*

Happy wildflower hunting...

But please remember, you are in a National Park. Regulations prohibit picking wildflowers so that they may produce seed for the next wildflower season.